DRASNIN PRODUCTIONS, INC.

March 17, 1991

Mr. Ma Yuanhe
Deputy Director
Foreign Affairs Department
Ministry of Radio, Film and Television
P.O. Box 4501
Beijing
The Peoples Republic of China

Dear Mr. Ma:

Public television in the United States (PBS) has authorized me to proceed with the documentary film project I discussed with you in Beijing last November. They would like me to film beginning in late May or early June for broadcast in the fall. Since time is short, I'm hoping we can begin the planning process as soon as possible. As you suggested, I've informed the Chinese embassy in Washington that I have made this request to you with the following proposal.

I know you are aware of my long career in television, during which I have devoted considerable time and effort to U.S.-China relations. It is now almost twenty years since my film, "Misunderstanding China", was first broadcast. Since then, it has been widely used in colleges, schools and public education programs. At that time, which was a major crossroads in relations between China and the United States, the lack of understanding was a serious obstacle to improved relations between our two countries.

Today, although much has changed, once again there are difficulties and misunderstandings in relations between China and America. Again, it is important to increase American understanding of realities in China and to seek a realistic understanding of policies and attitudes in this new historical period. This need for understanding applies not only to what Americans know about urban areas and city life in China but to rural areas and the peasant as well.

There are several topics that would be of current interest to an American audience, and we would of course also welcome your thoughts and suggestions. These topics would include:

1. Old horizons and new skylines: the importance of seeing today's China in the context of history and cultural traditions.

2. In a Chinese context, the pace and directions of reform, a little more than a decade after the beginning of new policies and programs. This would include the growth of the business

sector and the ingenuity of the entrepreneur, both urban and rural.

3. Cultural themes in an ever-changing China, reflecting both traditional and modern influences.

4. In addition, it is now twenty years since an American Ping-Pong team visited China, ending years of mutual suspicion and isolation and opening a new era in Sino-American relations. This might be an appropriate time to hear Chinese views of the relationship and of America's policies and perceptions regarding China at this historical juncture.

As I think I indicated to you, we are interested in the following locations for filming:

1. Beijing: for its obvious importance as the center of Chinese political, economic and cultural life.

2. Xian: the ancient capital is also an ancient meeting ground between East and West and today is also an important economic and cultural center; from a hilltop in Xian, you can see thousands of years of Chinese history.

3. Yenan: for its direct link to China's revolution and the Chinese Communist movement; a market town, part of China's rural landscape.

4. Chengdu: the ancient capital of China's most populous province and biggest rice producer, where many of the reforms of modernization began in the late 1970's; an area known for its enterprising peasants, and for poets. We would like to include the surrounding rural areas of Chengdu as well as the city itself.

5. Guangzhou: a foreign trade center as far back as the Tang Dynasty and a major industrial-commercial-trade center, from urban joint ventures to rural enterprise; and, with important links as well to China's cultural and revolutionary development. Guangzhou also provides a geographical balance for the film.

We estimate that the filming would take approximately 25-30 days, distributed as follows:

Beijing: 8 days (we would like to begin and end the filming in Beijing)

Xian: 5 days

Yenan: 3 days

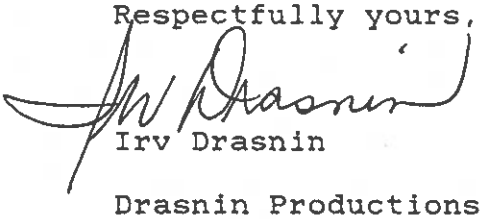
Chengdu: 6 days

Guangzhou: 5 days

Again, we would value your suggestions and guidance. Normally, we would have a crew of five persons, including myself. As you know, we must also be concerned with the limitations of a public television budget, and therefore, we are hopeful that suitable financial arrangements can be made.

I hope this provides you with the information you need to help facilitate this project. Because of the time factor, I would be most grateful for your reply as soon as possible regarding the next step. If you have further questions, please contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully yours,



Irv Drasnin

Drasnin Productions, Inc.
180 East 79th Street
New York, NY 10021
Tel. (212) 988-2409
Fax (212) 865-9788